

Welcome to the August 2025 newsletter. We have information about the new course on Norwegians in the Edderton area in WWII, a report on our Friends Trip and space this time for a number of other heritage snippets.

Norwegians in the Edderton Area in WWII

The last ARCH newsletter reported on the Norwegians in the Contin Area in WWII project, with the fascinating information assembled. Details are available on the [ARCH website](#). The display is currently at Coul House Hotel, and will move on in September.

Attention now turns more northerly, where the Norwegians were based before they came to the Contin / Dingwall area. After at time in the Dumfries area in 1940 and early 1941, the army was moved to Easter Ross in June 1941, based initially at Edderton in the grounds of the distillery. Officers were housed in Tain.



A course will focus on the Norwegians in the Edderton area. All are welcome to share memories and stories, help to identify sites in old photographs, examine source material or simply learn more about this relatively unknown story in Highland heritage. We'll be meeting on Tuesday mornings, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th September, 10:30-1pm at Edderton Community Hall. Free. And with coffees and teas. If interested please contact us on 077888 35466 or email archhighland@googlemail.com.



ARCH gratefully acknowledges support from the Beinn Tharsuinn Windfarm Community Fund Limited (Edderton Community Council).

Highland Archaeology Festival

This year's HAF festival returns to a two day conference, though still no events programme. The conference will be at Council Headquarters, Inverness on 27th and 28th September, and will include talks and the usual stalls from organisations. Details of the programme and booking information will be posted on the [HAF website](#) in the next weeks.

ARCH will have a stall with books, and Susan Kruse will give a talk about the Norwegian projects, including hot off the press results from the Edderton course.

Doors Open Day

As usual Doors Open Day provides an opportunity to visit buildings and museums throughout Scotland in September, many not usually open or providing additional access. As this goes to press, the [Doors Open Day website](#) is adding events. A shame that they have timetabled Ross-shire, Sutherland and Caithness on the same weekend, as there is so much to tempt one and not enough time.

New: ARCH Online Displays

The online display for Dingwall Station has joined those for Norwegians in Contin in WWII and and Golspie Fishertown Project. Links are from the [ARCH website](#). Over the year, we will gradually add displays from previous ARCH projects onto the website.



ARCH Friends Trip

The ARCH Friends trip this year, on one of the hottest days of the year, had an ecclesiastical theme, exploring some interesting medieval and later churches in the Tain area. We began at Edderton Old Kirk, a lovely post-Reformation church which has in its kirkyard a rare survival of



a wooden preaching ark, and unusually complete with communion table, benches and precentor's table. The kirkyard has a fine Pictish cross, and there are fragments of another Pictish carved stone in the vestry. A revised version of the illustrated booklet is extraordinarily good value at £5 +P&P, available from defin@btinternet.com.

The group then moved to Tain Museum where curator Jason Ubych gave us a guided tour of two medieval churches as well as a glimpse into the museum stores. Most Highland communities are lucky if they have a church with recognisable medieval fabric. Tain has three, and we visited the church on the links after lunch.

Our final stop of the day was Fearn Abbey, where David Newman gave us a



guided tour, inside and out. The most northerly monastic remains in Scotland, it has seen many uses over the years, and David helped us sort out the complex architectural history. The church has recently been made redundant and is seeking a new use. The Friends of Fearn Abbey invite people to help!

SCHA Grassroots Gatherings

ARCH has been involved at the Highland Heritage Day from its beginnings. It's been great to see the event grow each year, as more groups come together to share problems, solutions and ways to collaborate. Its model was embraced by the Scottish Community Heritage Alliance (of which ARCH Trustee Susan Kruse is also a trustee). SCHA has been rolling out similar heritage meetings throughout Scotland over the past year. At the events, there has been a similar appreciation of getting together and networking.



Inevitably many groups have missed out on the meetings, here in the Highlands and elsewhere. And it's now time to try and link groups from across Scotland. SCHA will be hosting online Grassroots Gatherings, where people involved in local heritage can share insights and problems. Some will focus on common issues, while others will be more general. Each is via Zoom, 7-8pm:

- 26th August - General Discussion
- 18th September - Volunteering
- 30th September - Fundraising
- 9th October - Social Media & Marketing
- 28th October - Signposting Resources
- 6th November - General Discussion

SCHA will also be offering training sessions on three issues raised during the roadshows:

- 23rd September – Volunteering
- 21st October – Funding
- 11th November – Social Media and Marketing

The Grassroots Gatherings and training sessions are free and all are welcome. To book, email scottishcommunityheritage@gmail.com, stating the session(s) you would like to attend. Further information about SCHA can be found at www.scottishcommunityheritagealliance.org

Exhibitions

A few exhibitions to tempt you:

Inspired by Our Heritage. A creative response to history and stories shared during workshops. Art & Photography Exhibition at Historylinks museum, Dornoch during August 2025.

History of North Kessock. A one day event, 13th September 11am-5pm at North Kessock Hall with displays, activities and refreshments.

Edderton Hill. Janey Clarke has created an exhibition in an old croft house on Edderton Hill, combining it with local walks to explore the rich heritage on the hill, from prehistoric to crofting remains. Email Janey at janey@lowerhill.co.uk if you would like copies of the map and walks.



Focus on Dingwall Museum

Three of ARCH's trustees are also volunteers at Dingwall Museum which is 100% volunteer run. It has been exciting to see new work building on old, providing good examples of how museums can be more than just collections of things. This year the museum turns 50, and a number of special events are taking place.

New displays and temporary ones

A visitor survey highlighted the need to place Dingwall in chronological context. ARCH Community Timeline course participants will recognise a new display, where a timeline provides a chronological background to the history of the Dingwall area, from prehistory to modern times, with highlighted examples. There is also a new display on Dingwall shops. A programme of

temporary displays is also being rolled out. A display case in Dingwall Library features a monthly selection of items from the store – 50 will be featured by the end of the year.

Picture Detectives

The Museum has a large number of photos without any information, or pictures which need local knowledge to identify people and places. On the last Wednesday of each month Picture Detectives meet at Dingwall Library, and many of these old photos are passed round. Coffees and teas, and plenty of chance to meet and chat.

Book group

The Dingwall Museum book group also meets at Dingwall Library. Past books include Norman Macrae's *The Romance of a Royal Burgh: Dingwall's Story of a Thousand Years* and Colin Macdonald's *Echoes of the Glen*. Informal, lively and all welcome.

Taking the museum to its communities

The collection area is roughly the catchment area of the local secondary school. In order to make outlying communities feel part of the museum – and to alert them to objects in the collections which relate to their area – the museum is taking objects out to the communities. At the same time, attendees are invited to bring objects, photographs, memories etc. Two sessions have been held in Contin and Muir of Ord, and four more are timetabled:

Strathpeffer Sat 30th Aug 1-3pm The Old Station
Evanton Tues 9th Sept 7-9pm Cornerstone Café
Marybank & Strathconon Thurs 18th Sept 7-9pm Fairburn Hall, Marybank
Culbokie Sat 8th Nov 10am-12pm Findon Hall

Alongside these activities an audit is in progress, with the intent to put the entire collection online. There have been surprises as the safes were examined: arrowheads from Louisiana, Egyptian and Roman pottery, a stuffed pine martin (killed on a Dingwall road), and a box containing late medieval and early modern documents. Each week there are new surprises!

For details of these and other activities, see the museum [website](#).

Like most museums throughout the Highlands, Dingwall Museum relies on volunteers and the wealth of interest and experience people bring. Do think about volunteering at your local museum, helping ensure its survival!



Can you Help ARCH?

ARCH Trustee Susan Kruse produces this newsletter and a monthly electronic newflash, highlighting talks, activities, events, exhibitions, projects, blogs and websites. We would like to do similar on social media, sharing facebook posts for similar – and indeed highlighting any ARCH activities. If you have a passion for facebook or other social media and an interest in helping ARCH, please get in touch!

Future ARCH Projects

ARCH is currently fundraising to roll out more of our popular Community Timelines courses. We are also interested in hearing from other groups who have projects they would like help with. There may be scope for collaboration!

ScotlandsPlaces retired

ScotlandsPlaces was a useful website run by Historic Environment Scotland combining elements of Canmore, the National Library of Scotland and National Records of Scotland. It also had very useful resources such as reproduction and transcription of the Ordinance Survey Name Books. Scotland's Places is no more and Canmore has been replaced by [Trove](#) (not to be confused with Treasure Trove). The OS Name Books have been transferred to [NRS Virtual Volumes](#) which also has various 17th and 18th century [tax rolls](#).

Heritage Events

The [ARCH website](#) posts any events we know about. If you are member of a local heritage society, or know of something interesting, forward the details to ARCH, and we'll post them on the website and include them in our monthly newflashes.

Friends of ARCH

If you enjoy what ARCH provides, please consider becoming a 'Friend of ARCH'. The Friends are a group of supporters who help ARCH in many diverse ways. ARCH relies on Friends' and lecture donations to help pay for office space, insurance, postage on news-letters, HAF walks, and the other mundane but important matters which allow us to continue. We value your help and support! Friends of ARCH are requested to give an annual donation of £10 (or more if you wish). There is an annual Friends' invitational event. To become a Friend — or to renew — contact ARCH or fill in the form below. If you prefer, you can pay by [Paypal from our website](#).

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THANK YOU!

ARCH

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